

William Flood the In form
1623. 430



William Wood the first
1653



The Life and Death ⁴⁴⁰

OF
Griffin Flood Informer.

Whose cunning courses, churlish manners, and
troublesome Informations, molested a number of
plaine dealing people in this City of London,

Wherein is also declared the murder of *John Chipperford* Vintner,
for which fact the said *Griffin Flood* was pressed to death
the 18. day of *January* last past.



L O N D O N,
Printed for I. T. and are to be sold at the signe of the Bible
withour New-gate. 1 6 2 3.

The Life and Death

OF
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Whose cunning courses, churlish manners, and
troublesome Informations, molested a number of
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Wherein is also declared the manner of John Chipperford's
death for which fact the said Griffin Flood was
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L O N D O N
Printed for A. T. and are to be sold at the Sign of the Bible
without New-gate 1613.

The Life and Death of Griffin Flood Informer.

Of the bad condition, foule speeches, and ill demeanor
of Griffin Flood, and how he became first to be an
Informer.



OW first to make a character or
description of this *Griffin Flood*.
He was a fellow of meane birth,
rude bringing vp, ill instructed in
eyther learning or good man-
ners, harsh in speech, and chur-
lish in condition, full of quarrels, stubborne and
vntruly, and in bricfe, of a most debauched condi-
tion, as by the sequell may appeare.

But omitting these, and to come to particulars:
he was in his yonger dayes bound Prentise with a
Cutler or Dresser of leather, in which time of his
seruice he picked such quarrels among his fellow
seruants, and followed them with such cunning, as
they being ouer-awed with his shamelesse lying,
were forced to submit to whatsoever he pleaded a-
gainst them, in so much that sometimes they were
faine to buy their peace with their purses. And thus
by his cunning informations of falsehoods to his
Master and Mistris, in which he commonly persuai-
led, he learned to tread the first step to this trou-
blesome

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blesome course of life, now named an Informer, where after being made a free-man of this City, he followed the same wayes, and became a great troubler of diuers other seruants and apprentices dwelling neere him, where if he found any that he knew, either in Tauerne, Alehouse, Bowling-alley, or Play-house, or else going abroad in Service time, when they should haue beene at the Church to the seruice of God with their masters, he would be sure to pick some feeling of money from them, or make it knowne to the displeasure of their parents or masters; all which these poore seruants and apprentices would doe before their names and credits should come in question.

Of the manner of his informations against Tapsters, Hostlers, Chamberlaines, and such like.

After this, entring further into this kind of life, and perceiuing some small gaine to come thereby, he began to haunt Alehouses, Innes, Hosteries, Cellars, and such like, where if hee found either forraine Tapster, Hostler, Chamberlaine, or any other party that was no free-man of this City; to him would he priuately come, and thus make his glose; My friend (quoth he) you being no freeman, but liue here by sufferance vnder your master, I vnderstand that there be certaine Informers which I know, that meane to trouble and sue you by action, and bring you in question for the wronging of the customes of this City, where-in no man must make his liuing by way of trading,

but

but such as haue serued seven yeares an appren-
tise, or else made free man by adoption or pur-
chase; now if you will (quoth *Flood*) present this
trouble and be my client, I will for a small matter
defend you from the same, and cleare you from
all Informers whatsoever, for I am an enemy to
all such knaues whose purpose is to wrong such
honest meaning men as you are, for my consci-
ence drawes me to it, and I will proue honest there-
in. The poore country fellow being thus honied
and loath to leaue his masters seruice, hath *Flood*
downe into the cellar, makes him drinke, lends
him money, and becomes so pliable to his condi-
tions, that he is led vp and downe as with a twine
threed, till a part of his meanes falls into this *Floods*
purse; but no longer peny, no longer *pater noster*,
the fellow growes weary, and is no longer able to
feed *Floods* desires, but leaues him off, and sub-
mits himselfe to the triall of his action, where
Flood as a cunning lacke on both sides, follows
him so close, that after much money spent, hee is
forced to forsake his seruice, and to leaue the City,
and the master of the same forraigner, is likewise
brought to composition to be rid of this crafty
Informer.

Another way of information that *Flood* used against
forraigners and such like.

THis *Flood* also comes to another fellow being
no free man, where after the like conference as
before, he takes vpon him, with the mans consent
to

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to bring him into question, and so to prevent all others of the like, declares against him by writ, and so it hangs in Court many yeares & followed by Flood for a monethly stipend received from the fellow thus sued: and so all other Informers were prevented for bringing him in question; for one of them by order of Law cannot take anothers case in hand. And thus Flood to his great benefit, dealt with many poore people in London.

How he troubled an honest Ale-wife not farre from Cripplegate: and how finely she requited him.

THere was an honest Alewife, whose name and dwelling I omit, not farre from Cripplegate, well known and reputed of among her neighbors, who kept in her house good lodging and orderly diet for entertainment of strangers and wayfaring men. Amongst others that resorted to her house, there was a forraigne Tailor, a very poore man, who ran more on the score for lodging and dyet, then he was able to pay, therefore to come out of her debt, he desired to work out the same, either in making new apparell, or mending of old: where upon this Alewife put an old peticoat of hers to mend, which got the poore man but sixe-pence. Which matter this Flood having notice of, warned both her and her husband into the Court for setting this forraigner on worke: where, doe what eyther he or she could, it cost them forty Shillings, and so came home without any other comfort, for Flood had shared his part of the money, of which

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he made no little brags amongst his Companions; but it fell out after a certaine time this *Flood* came againe to the said Alewives house, thinking to find out another like Prize, where casting his knauish eye vp and downe, hee espied the good wife run downe into the Cellar with a blacke Pot or two, (measures contrary to the Cities custome) after followes *Flood*, and thinking to attach them, the woman hauing a ready wit, and now thinking to be reueng'd, caught vp a Pewter quart Pot, and lustily liid it vpon *Floods* pate, and most grieuou-ly broke both his head and face, and withall cryed out with a loud voyce, Oh help, murther, murther, the noyse being heard not only vp into the house but abroad into the streets, caused many people come running in, and inquiring the matter, shee with fained teares cryed out hee would haue ra-uisht her and forst her against her will, and that she to defend her selfe had with a Pewter pot broake his face, wherevpon all the beholders knowing *Flood* to bee a very knaue, and beleeuing the wo-man by her teares to tell true, called for a Consti-ble, who carried both *Flood* and the Alewife before a Iustice, where she standing stiffely in her accusa-tion, he was committed to Prison, where hee lay with his broken pate and face, vtill such time as he had giuen the woman a good summe of money in composition for the supposed wrong hee had done her.

How

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*How Flood churlishly handled two Informers, and
of his hatred against all Firken-men.*

After this, *Flood* becomming a little kinder to poore Ale-wiues, and vsing much to resort to a Cookes house a Widdow, which often gaue him a breakfast to stay his knauish stomacke; where-vpon (as the Diuell is good to some body) so this *Flood* stood close to this woman in courtesie, and promised to defend her from all actions whatfoeuer; for indeed as then there were a couple of Informers had her in chase, and by no meanes could shee bee rid of them; for commonly they came once a moneth to her house and got mony of her: but it so hapned whilst *Flood* was talking with this woman, that these two aforesaid Informers came to her house, according to their accustomed manner, which *Flood* perceiuing, and being a little Pot-shaken, tooke vp a broome-staffe and fell a bum-basting them, and being all together by the cares downe in the kennell, *Flood* like a cunning knaue all begraueled and bedurtied his owne face, crying out they would murther him, and by that meanes so cunningly vsed the matter that his fellow-knaues were carried both to the Counter, whilst hee being the third and worst, escaped imprisonment. But now marke the iest, as they were going to Prison, there comes by a lusty lubberly Firken-man, bearing out drinke to his Customers, a familiar friend and acquaintance of one of these Informers thus beaten, & hearing of these wrongs done
by

by Flood, falls vpon him and most branely behangs him, & so amongst the tumult of people gets him away vnknowne, and leaues Flood behind with the amends in his owne hands, seeking for hee could not tell whom: wherevpon in mortall hatred, he sought reuengement against all Firken-men; and for this one mans sake vow'd to bee a plague to all the rest, and so after that there could not bee a Firken-man step out of doores, but hee would be on their iackes, especially all those that were forrai-ners, insomuch, were hee but in the shape of a Firken-man, it was enough for him to set his kna-uisht wit on worke: by this meanes many of them were inforced to buy their Freedomes, to their great charges. Others, that were of the poorer sort, hee with his cunning-fram'd Actions affrighted from London. where they liued as before in much Pouerty.

*How he troubled a poore Sheere-grinder, for relie-
uing his owne father.*

Flood still following these pittifesse courses, came vpon a time to a Sheere-grinders shop, where he saw a very poore Country old man turning the stone, which old man was the Sheere-grinders own father, and in loue to his sonne took that paines to saue him from hiring one to doe the same worke, all this Flood noted, and with a harsh and commanding language, said, my friend, quoth hee, how darest thou bee so bold as to set a For-reiner on worke, knowing that Flood stands here

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as a witnesse; I tell thee I will make thee repent it: these, and such like threatning words not onely amazed the poore Sheare-grinder, but much grieved the old man: but to bee short, in question was hee brought, and censured by Order to give satisfaction to *Flood* for his Information, and the old man was discharged from any further labour therein; but lay vpon his poore sonne to be kept in charity: and thus was the cruelty of this *Flood* expressed to his shame and disgrace.

How his harsh and churlish dealing caused a poore Flaxe-maid to hang her selfe.

I Must not here omit his harsh dealing against a poore Flaxe-maid in London, who after she had serued twelue yeares Prentise, and wearyed with that seruitude, tooke shop for her selfe, and set vp; of which Flaxe-maid when *Flood* had notice, hee came vnto her, from whom hee oftentimes got much money, and still to buy her owne quietnesse, (being not free but a forreiner) prouided still for his cunning bribery, and had still her money in readinesse, so long, that in time shee grew weary of him, and not able to hold out any longer, shee reuealed it vnto a friend of hers, who counselled her to get her freedome, which shee might easily doe, hauing serued twelue yeares Prentise, which counsell shee followed, and was made free of a worshipfull Company, but not of the City, which was thought sufficient for a womans security to follow Flaxe-dressing. Hereupon *Flood* percei-
uing

using his wonted benefits to faile, hammer'd in his knauish pate another trick of Information against her; so watching his time, hee espyed a Country Chapman buying a certaine parcell of Flaxe of her, and giuing her some earnest thereof, as *Flood* tooke hold of by wittnesse, hee presently tooke possession thereof, as goods forreine bought and forreine sold, and recouer'd them by way of Action, which was a great hinderance both to the Flaxe-maid, and to the Countrey Chapman: but to be short, the maid was still haunted with the Informations of this *Flood*, which draue her (as some reported) to such a melancholly, that shee tooke no comfort in her businesse, and as it was knowne afterward, shee hang'd her selfe in her owne girdle: the cause I will not say was *Floods*, but let such as vnderstood the manner of her life and carriage, in discretion, iudge and censure thereof rightly.

Money I will haue money from thee then. Money from me? (saith the other) doe thy worst. I care not for thee, and such like were the words that passed betwixt them, and so they departed. But within a while after, Flood brought this honest man in question about the Steare for building, which was about a little shop that he kept to sell. **B** 3 **How** made it, not as Flood alleged to sufficiently pierced with time and nature, of which he made such a long declaration to the Court, that he so pulled the man, that he knew not well how to answer the same: and though Flood little preuailed in his suit, yet by his harsh railing language, and foule words which

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How Flood troubled an honest man onely for asking him a question.

THe debauched carriage of this *Flood* was such, that if any but gazingly lookt vpon him, hee would be sure to picke quarrels with him, and if he vsed not his speeches with aduilement, this *Flood* would take aduantage on his words, for the least occasion was sufficient for him to make an action of, whose troublesome courses are verified as followeth: There was an honest man, belonging to Blackwall-hall, who as he stood in Guild-hall yard, saw *Flood* come forth with a payre of Taylors sheares in his hand, of whom this man demanded what they cost; why fellow (quoth *Flood*) in a clownish manner, Dost thou thinke I stole them. Why no (quoth the other) yet I may aske a question: A question (quoth *Flood*) I pray thee what art thou? I am a man (quoth he.) A man (said *Flood*) I will haue money from thee then. Money from me? (quoth the other) doe thy worst, I care not for thee, and such like were the words that passed betwixt them, and so they departed. But within a while after, *Flood* brought this honest man in question about the Statute for buildings, which was about a little shop that he kept to sell flaxe in, not, as *Flood* alledged, so sufficiently plastered with lime and haire, of which he made such a long declaration to the Court, that he so pussed the man, that he knew not well how to answer the same: and though *Flood* little preuailed in his suit, yet by his harsh roring language, and foule words which

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which he so clamoured against this honest man, that for quietnesse sake he was forced to give some satisfaction to be rid of him.

How Flood deceived an Officer, and cunningly made him arrest his owne master.

VPon a time this *Flood* comes to one of the Cities officers, and tels him he hath a Writ to serue vpon a free-man for setting a forraigner on worke, of which this Officer was glad to heare of, and thinking thereby to get money, as hee had oftentimes before so done by *Floods* meanes, goes with him; where coming together to a Worshipfull Gentlemans of this City, they found a foraine painter, new colouring the Gentlemans house wals, which Gentleman (to speake truly) a Worshipfull Knight, though not named, seeing *Flood* and the other Officer in the yard, comes forth and demanded what newes: Marry (quoth *Flood*) here is a Writ to serue on your Worship for maintaining forraigners, and thereupon giues the same to the Officer to doe his duty; at which the Officer lookes very blancke, considering it was his owne Master on whom he should serue it, yet notwithstanding according to his oath so done it was, and his Master was forced to compound with *Flood*: who after tooke a pride in such trecherous actions, making himselfe merry at the Officer, whom hee had cunningly brought to arrest his owne master.

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Of Floods ingratitude for a Dutch Chandlers benevolence to him lying in the Compter

THis Flood, in acting of many of these his arch knaueries, was at length outstripped by a fellow cunninger then himselfe, and being overthrowne in an action, and condemned in a round sum of money, for want of sureties was laid in the Compter; where lying in prison in much necessity, there was a Dutch Chandler, I will not say dwelling neere unto Newgate, that in pittie oftentimes sent him much reliefe, as meat and drinke from his owne table both at dinner and supper, and now and then some small peeces of money to comfort him, with an intent after his imprisonment to draw him to his friendship, and that Flood should be a trusty staffe to defend him from all informations that any other Informer should haue against him, for commonly these Dutch Chandlers are much troubled with those kind of people, and therefore this Flood he purchased to make his pillar to leane on: This passed on, and many courtesies were sent to him lying in prison by the Dutch Chandler, which were all as butter melted in the Sunne; for after when Flood had got his liberty, and followed againe his former courses of life, this Dutch Chandler was the first man he brought in action, and for all his forepassed fauours received at his hands, he was the party hee made most prize of.

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*How Flood came to search a Taverners service;
and how finely the Vintner requited him.*

Flood growing malicious against a Tauerne-keeper of London, whose name I omit, came vpon a Sabbath day in Seruice time, and brought the Church-wardens to his house, where finding certaine good fellowes taking their morning draught, sought to haue him presented: but the Vintner hauing a ready wit, wrought as cunning a trick to bring both Flood and the Churchwardens into the same trespasse; so the foresaid Tauerne-keeper seeing himselfe fallen into the danger of the Law, sayd as followeth, Master Churchwardens, and you Master Flood, I pray you be good vnto me, I am a young beginner, and a little trouble will much hinder me, therefore I pray you stand my good friends, and in kindnesse take a cup of wine, and withall called for a slice of rost beefe, which the plaine dealing Church-wardens well accepted of, and withall Flood being a hungry fellow, was not behind in the same given breakfast; which being finished, quoth Flood, this shall not serue your turne, for I must haue money from you, and it is not your bribing breakfast shall satisfie my turne. Why haue, replied the Vintner, Thou art as deepe in the fault as I, for any of these my customers, for the Churchwardens and my selfe also haue both eaten and drinke here in my house in seruice time, of which I now take witness, therefore does thy worst, I aspende for thee. At which

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words *Flood* grew a little pacified, and was contented to let the *Winter* goe unpresented for that time, and ever after those Churchwardens much favoured the said *Tauerne*.

How Flood our braided Citizen with a red nose.

Vpon a time *Flood* being railing and roring in the *Guild-hall*, as his manner was, a Citizen who had a red nose, a very substantiall man, rebuked him, calling him brazen fac'd fellow to be so audacious in so current a place as that was. Brazen fac'd fellow (quoth *Flood*) if your copper nose Sir were set on my brazen face it would make a very rich show, which words not onely daunted the Citizen, but made him silently passe away much abashed. *Forroguer, raskall, flauie, and runnagate,* were as common in his mouth as *how doe you sir* to a man of court.

Of his churlish keeping the walkes in Moore-fields.

TO speake yet further of churlish condition, he was chosen (being fit for a troublesome office) to oversee the walkes in *Moore-fields*, and like the *Pinder of Wakefield* to prevent the intercourse of people over the grass, and not to suffer them to make other paths beside the walkes. To which office being chosen, he got him a sturdy browne bill, and like a valiant champion, intercepted all in-

rodes over the fields, flourishing ney her old good
young, rich nor poore, Gentleman or other, in
such sort that he had many roring combats, and
much mischief was done by his harsh behaviour, in
where he not onely brake many a shew-pate, but
setten shew-pates under the Railes, wherby sundry
people (snooping under the Railes) tore their
cloakes, bands and apparel, and so spoiled their
cloathes in such sort, that he was not without ma-
ny bitter curses; and now and then hee caused sun-
dry of the ruder & vniuersal sort of people to sit in
the stocks, for their stubbornesse in crossing the
Walkes. And many other praukes hee there
plaid, which though he were not ashamed to act,
you modesty forbids me relate: in which he shew-
ed himselfe rather a beast then a man, so farre he
forgot Christianity and honesty, that he lost all
humanitie: and for that cause hee was very de-
seruedly put from that meanes, which had bene
sufficient (if honestly vied) to haue maintained a
man to liue well vpon.

*Of his shamelesse bragging and boasting of base
conditions.*

Not Ever was there (I thinke) the like audacious
and shamelesse fellow liuing in this Citie,
nor any of a more impudent carriage before his
betters, for to some, to whom hee was farre
equall would he most vbraidingly say with a full
mouth, what, know you not Griffin Flood I bring
I not the most milke to you paylee as it be I than
bring

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bring hectors to you, and I tell you that his words
(by his Informations) shall make men quake, fur-
thermore, to my knowledge I saw him once stand
in the middle of Guild-hall, with his armes akem-
bow on both sides, with a number of people about
him, where hee being not ashamed, boastingly
said, I thinke in my conscience I am the veriest
knaue in all England, and when I am buried, this
shall bee my Epitaph:

*Here lieth Griffin Flood full low in his grave,
Which liued a Rascall and died a Knaue.
Of his manners and troublesome carriage in the time
Of his imprisonment, we are told in the*

Returne wee now to his imprisonment in New-
gate, where since his comming thither, the o-
ther prisoners haue bene so troubled with his rail-
ling language, that they accounted him rather a
monster than a man, and such quarrels hee bred
amongst them, that they many times fell together
by the eares, so that day nor night could they bee
quiet for him, for what with his cursing, bawling,
roaring, and blaspheming, hee shewed himselfe ra-
ther an Atheist than a Christian, and little remorse
of conscience possessed him, and all his former of-
fences came little to his remembrance, especially
these petty abuses before rehearsed; but the maine
ground of his imprisonment, which was for the
murder of Iohn Chippensfield Vintener, something
troubled him, and a little troubled his Conscience;
for blood lies heavy on a murderers soule, and the

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renewed thereof howely thunders in his eares; so by this *Flood* was it here verified; for vpon a night in New-gate as hee lay in his bed; in his dreame a fearfull vision appeared vnto him, which was (as hee thought) the ghastly shape of the man hee had murdered, with a bleeding wound in his brest gaping wide open, threatening as it were a speedy reuengement, at which *Flood* in his sleepe cryed out most fearefully, the Diuell, the Diuell pursues me, helpe, helpe, hee will teare me in pieces, with such like words of terror and amazement, that many of the Prisoners affrighted rose from their sleepes, and came to pacifie him in this his distracted agonie; for such were his fits in New-gate, and so distemperd was his braine, that he continued there in great discontent without any patience.

Of a reuengement which Tapsters took vpon him in New-gate

A Man he was, that few loved; neither in Prison nor without, and therefore came many thither to vex and torment him amongst the rest in a merry vaine came certaine Tapsters to him in Prison, belike some which hee had wronged by his troublesome informations, who instead of comforts brought him soups, and instead of reliefs gaue him griefes; for every one called for his Can of beere, saying to him in mockage, heere Mr. *Flood*, I drinke to you, heere Mr. *Flood*, a health to you, and such like severally, each of them tossing off his beere, giuing him onely the

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empty Cans, but therein neuer a drop of drinke, whereupon *Flood* grew so enraged, that he enstild them with no better then Slaues and Rogues, and for their sakes vowed a reuenge (if euer at liberty) against all other Tapsters.

And to put the same in practice, hee presently sent for a debtor of his which was a Tapster, that owed him a certaine sum of money, which fellow in pittie, by reason of his imprisonment brought him a part thereof, thinking therewith in that his extremity to content him; but *Flood* as his churlish custome euer was, so kept hee his old order, and would not receiue lesse then his whole debt, whereupon the fellow goes his wayes and bids him recover it by action: which *Flood* with a sterne looke threatned to doe, but afterward considering how his case stood, and how that (in prison) hee lay much impouerished, sent for some part of his money before promised. Not so, quoth the Tapster, for I am otherwise minded; returning him this answer, according to the Prouerbe:

He that will not while he may,

When he would he shall haue may.

So was it with *Flood*, when he might haue liued well, and in good gouernment, the want of grace and seruing God, cut him off with a nay, where then being tempted by the deuill, hee ranne himselfe so deepe into the danger of the law, that his life answered it with an vntimely death.

How after all these his troublesome courses of life, he was for a murther pressed to death.

NOW to come to the last period of his shame and deuillish manners, in an agony of wrath (furthered on by Satan) he most wickedly stabbed a Constable, and withall a Vintner both at one time, whereof the Vintner, after he had long lyen languishing, died as a man murdered by wilfull violence, for which this *Flood* was atatched, imprisoned, arraigned, and put to tryall, but by no perswasions would he commit himselfe to the Law, but most obstinately stood to the seuerer iustice of the Bench, who according to custome, censured him to the Presse, where he receiued his deserts, by being bruised in terrible manner to a most fearfull death: whose execution was performed in the pressing yard at Newgate, vpon the 18. of *Ianuary* this present yeare.

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